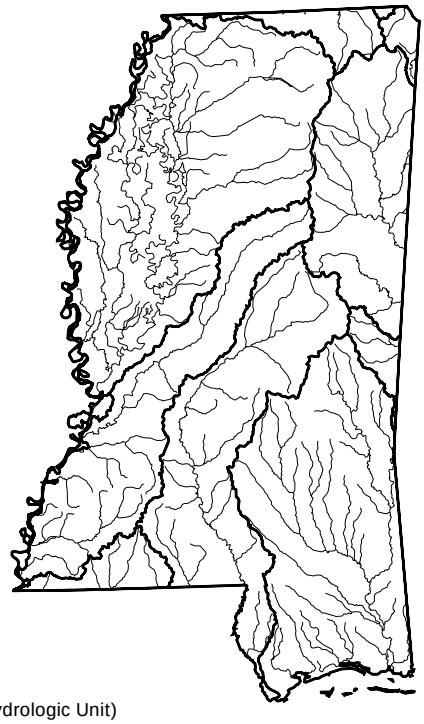
Mississippi



Basin Boundaries
(USGS 6-Digit Hydrologic Unit)

For a copy of the Mississippi 1998 305(b) report, contact:

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*Assessed river percentages presented in this summary are based on the state's electronic submittal of 305(b) data. Due to the state's use of evaluated nonpoint source assessment data, which focused on potential problem areas (92% of the total assessed river mileage), the resulting 305(b) data are biased toward these waters. These evaluated waters have no known monitoring data indicating impairment.

Surface Water Quality*

Of the 46% of Mississippi's river miles assessed (3% monitored and 43% evaluated), 94% have fair water quality that partially supports aquatic life uses, and 1% have poor water quality that does not support aquatic life uses. About 97% of the assessed rivers are listed as not fully supporting swimming. The most common pollutants include nutrients, pesticides, suspended solids, and bacteria. Evaluative information suggests that agriculture is the most common source of pollution in rivers, followed by municipal sewage treatment plants.

Of the assessed lake acres, about 98% have good water quality that fully support aquatic life uses, and over 99% fully support swimming. Nutrients, metals, siltation, pesticides, and oxygen-depleting substances are the most common pollutants, and agriculture is the dominant source of pollution in Mississippi's lakes.

Over 88% of assessed estuaries have good quality that fully supports aquatic life uses. The most common pollutants in estuaries are organic enrichment, turbidity, and bacteria. The state attributes these pollutants to urban runoff/storm sewers, septic systems, and land disposal activities. Of the waters assessed for shellfish harvesting, 61% are listed as restricted or prohibited. Most of the restrictions are mandates by the state's Shellfish Sanitation program. Twenty percent are classified as buffer zones bordering ship channels, and most of the remainder is classified as restricted due to proximity to wastewater outfalls.

The state has posted eight fish consumption advisories and three commercial fishing bans due to elevated concentrations of PCBs, PCP, dioxins, and/or mercury detected in fish tissues.

Mississippi did not report on the condition of wetlands.

Ground Water Quality

Extensive contamination of drinking water aquifers and public water supplies is uncommon in Mississippi although localized ground water contamination has been detected. The most frequently identified sources of contamination are leaky underground storage tanks and faulty septic systems. Brine contamination is also a problem near oil fields. Little data exist for domestic wells. Ground water protection programs include the Pesticide Container Recycling, Underground Storage Tank, Underground Injection Control, Agrichemical Ground Water Monitoring, and Wellhead Protection Programs (approved by EPA in 1993).

Programs to Restore Water Quality

Mississippi developed and adopted (1994, after public review) comprehensive regulations for conducting Section 401 Water Quality Certifications, enabling the state to review federal licenses and permits for compliance with state water quality standards. Mississippi also expanded its definition of waters of the state to include wetlands and ground waters.

Programs to Assess Water Quality

Historically, the state annually sampled about 25 of their 57 historical fixed monitoring stations on a rotating schedule. The state has been able to significantly expand its fixed monitoring network to 143 stations statewide.

The state now monitors physical and chemical parameters monthly, metals in the water column quarterly, and biological parameters once a year. Several stations are also sampled annually for metals and pesticides in fish tissues.

In 1997, the state also adopted its Basinwide Approach to water quality management.This basinwide approach is supported by a rotating basin fixed-station monitoring network that augments the statewide network of ambient monitoring stations.

Individual Use Support in Mississippi

Designated Use[a]	Total Miles Assessed	Percent Good (Fully Supporting)	Good (Threatened)	Fair (Partially Supporting)	Poor (Not Supporting)	Not Attainable
Rivers and Streams (Total Miles = 84,003)[b,c]						
	38,711[c]	2	3	94	1	<1
	961	47	27	24	2	0
	11,994[c]	1	1	93	4	0
Lakes (Total Acres = 500,000)						
	274,497	66	32	2	0	0
	272,337	47	43	10	<1	0
	31,923	100	0	<1	0	0
Estuaries (Total Square Miles = 760)						
	199	10	79	11	0	0
	50	43	57	0	0	0
	43	34	5	61	0	0
	339	65	28	7	0	0

Note: Figures may not add to 100% due to rounding.

– Not reported in a quantifiable format or unknown.

[a] A subset of Mississippi's designated uses appear in this figure. Refer to the state's 305(b) report for a full description of the state's uses.

[b] Includes nonperennial streams that dry up and do not flow all year.

[c] Mississippi notes its assessments are biased due to the state's extensive use of evaluated nonpoint source assessment data, which focused on problem areas.